

Richard is quite the everyday comedian, telling friends and neighbors that breathing gives him the most pleasure. If he had his life to do over again, Richard said he would get more education, and his advice to young people today is to always do things in moderation and be conservative.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Richard Riedel for reaching his 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as him.

“THE PATERSON GREAT FALLS
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
ACT”

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce the “Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park Act” as my first act in the 111th Congress. This bipartisan legislation was approved by the House in October 2007, and would designate a National Park at the majestic Great Falls in Paterson, NJ. I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation as soon as possible.

Fifteen miles west of New York City, the Great Falls was the second largest waterfall in colonial America. No other natural wonder in America has played such an important role in our nation's historic quest for freedom and prosperity. At the Great Falls, Alexander Hamilton conceived and implemented a plan to harness the force of water to power the new industries that would secure our economic independence.

Hamilton told Congress and the American people that at the Great Falls he would begin implementation of his ambitious strategy to transform a rural agrarian society dependent upon slavery into a modern economy based on freedom. True to Hamilton's vision, Paterson became a great manufacturing city, producing the Colt revolver, the first submarine, the aircraft engine for the first trans-Atlantic flight, more locomotives than any city in the Nation, and more silk than any city in the world.

New Jersey's Great Falls is the only National Historic District that includes both a National Natural Resource and a National Historic Landmark. In a special Bicentennial speech in Paterson with the spectacular natural beauty of the Great Falls in the background, the late President Gerald R. Ford said, “We can see the Great Falls as a symbol of the industrial might which helps to make America the most powerful Nation in the world.”

Preeminent Hamilton biographers, an esteemed former Smithsonian Institution curator, the former chief of the National Park Service Historic American Engineering Record, and distinguished professors at Yale, Princeton, Harvard, NYU, Brown and other universities have filed letters with the National Park Service strongly recommending a National Historical Park for the Great Falls Historic District. Editorial boards, Federal, State, and local officials and community groups have also endorsed the campaign to award a National Park Service designation to the Falls.

Scholars have concluded that Pierre L'Enfant's innovative water power system in

Paterson, and many factories built later, constitute the finest remaining collection of engineering and architectural structures representing each stage of America's progress from a weak agrarian society to a leader in the global economy. It is a little known fact that L'Enfant was hired by Hamilton to create Paterson as the sister city to Washington, DC, having completed his plan of Washington only months before arriving in Paterson.

Madam Speaker, Congress must act now to pass this vital piece of legislation, so that we may fully recognize these cultural and historic landmarks that have played such a seminal role in America's history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this Chamber today. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall votes 1 and 4; “nay” on rollcall vote 3; and for Rep. NANCY PELOSI (CA-08) on rollcall vote 2 for the election of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

ISRAEL'S MILITARY ACTION IN
GAZA

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, for the past several years, Israelis living near Gaza have endured a continual state of fear due to the thousands of rocket attacks launched from there by Hamas. When the six-month cease fire between Hamas and Israel recently ended, Hamas responded almost immediately by firing more than 70 missiles at civilian targets within Israel. On December 27th, Israel, in an act of self defense, struck at Hamas targets in Gaza in response to these continued attacks, and I want to express my strong support for Israel's right of self-defense.

Israel has taken meaningful steps in recent years to push the peace process forward, including unilaterally withdrawing from Gaza in 2005. Unfortunately, Hamas has not met Israel's efforts towards a peaceful coexistence, and has instead increased military operations against its neighbor and continues to deny Israel's right to exist.

These unfortunate developments are tragic, but have been precipitated by Hamas' aggression. Hamas must stop the rocket attacks and all parties in the region need to commit to renewing efforts at peace. The U.S. should remain involved in the peace process and I will continue to work with my colleagues in Congress towards this goal.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DIS-
TRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSE
VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing, I believe for the last time, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act, simultaneously with our Senate partners, Senators JOE LIEBERMAN and ORIN HATCH. The bill we introduce today also will add two permanent House seats, the first increase in 96 years. It therefore carries a triple bonus: the first vote for the District of Columbia after 212 years, an additional seat for Utah, and two new permanent seats for the House of Representatives itself. The citizens of the District of Columbia are deeply grateful for the persistent partnership and a bipartisan dedication that Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator HATCH continue to bring to this bill, and for the continued support of Utah Governor Jon Huntsman.

Because of the importance to the city of achieving the vote after more than two centuries, the D.C. Voting Rights Act is my first bill of the 111th Congress. This year we introduce the bill as members of the armed services from the District of Columbia are again engaged in war abroad. In gratitude for the service of our residents serving today, and of those who have served since our country was founded, I dedicate the bill this year to the first soldier from the District to die for his country in the Iraq War, 21-year-old D.C. National Guard Specialist, Daryl Dent, and to the District's first unknown soldier to die after he picked up arms to fight for liberation on the promise of taxation without representation. Although two centuries apart, the first to die in these wars had in common fighting for the vote. Our first residents here fought in the War for Independence. Specialist Dent gave his life ensuring the vote for Iraqi citizens, a right he did not live to get for himself.

Today's bill is the first in the Free and Equal series of bills that I will introduce this session to complete the full roster of citizenship rights the residents of the Nation's capital, that the first soldiers were promised and for which today's soldiers continue to give their lives. There can be no doubt that the revolutionaries who invented America's most quoted national slogan did not create a new nation in order to get the vote, only to turn around and deny the vote to the citizens of their capital.

This bill was passed by the House in the 110th Congress, thanks to Speaker NANCY PELOSI who has long fought for the rights of D.C. residents and personally insisted that this legislation go forward as a bill of historic importance, Majority Leader STENY HOYER, my long-time regional friend, who has been an especially outspoken champion of this bill; Judiciary Chairman JOHN CONYERS, who gave the bill his priority attention, emblematic of the strong support he always has brought to our rights throughout his long service in Congress; and Chairman HENRY WAXMAN, who as ranking member and then as chair of the Oversight and Government Reform committee, also was a central figure in ensuring passage; and many others among my colleagues in both chambers and both parties, who have made special efforts for passage of the D.C. House

Voting Rights Act. My special thanks to Tom Davis, my good friend and strong partner on this bill, who retired at the end of last session. It was Tom's idea to pair the District with Utah after Utah narrowly missed getting a seat following the last census. I will always be grateful to Tom for the unfailing bipartisan spirit that characterized all his work as chair of the Oversight and Government Reform committee, especially his consistent respect for home rule and for affording me every opportunity to fashion this bill when he was in the Republican majority and I was a minority member. I must also thank the two important coalitions of organizations that have led this fight, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, whose leader, Wade Henderson also has been a close advisor throughout the many years of this struggle, and D.C. Vote, and its leader Ilir Zherka, who gave our bill indispensable strength through a superior grassroots organization that led the successful lobbying strategy here and nationwide and singlehandedly raised the funds necessary to take D.C.'s struggle national.

There is every reason to believe that the D.C. bill will finally prevail this year. The bill easily passed in the House in 2007, and now has an estimated 64 votes in the Senate, considerably more than the 60 needed. The addition of seven Democratic senators, who replaced seven Republican opponents of the bill, together with the eight remaining Republicans who supported the bill, should assure that the bill will have significantly more than the 57 Senate votes it received in 2007. We are equally encouraged that President-elect Barack Obama, who was a co-sponsor of the bill in the Senate, will sign the D.C. House Voting Rights Act when it reaches his desk.

My service in Congress has been defined by the search for a way to get full representation for the city where my family has lived since before the Civil War. That search has been guided by the pursuit of the maximum possible, including the two-day debate followed by a vote on statehood more than 10 years ago, the vote I won in the Committee of the Whole during my second term, and the "No Taxation Without Representation" Act for votes both in the House and Senate. The struggle has been driven always by what was required but also by what was possible, as with the Committee of the Whole vote on some but not all matters on the House floor and the Home Rule Act, the path-breaking enacted before I came to Congress that gave the city partial self-government.

The Congress which has always been divided by regional and parochial concerns, never does what is clearly right, even granting a vote to American citizens who are second per capita in federal income taxes paid to support their government and have served in every war, including the war that created our country driven by the slogan of "No Taxation without Representation." However, the people of the District of Columbia have never ceased demanding the full measure of their rights, while insisting on all that is possible for each generation. The people of the nation's proud capital will never give up on our full rights as American citizens.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT "RED"
McKEON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Robert "Red" McKeon on being inducted into the Connecticut Firefighters Hall of Fame. There is perhaps no one more worthy of such an honor than Red.

Red has been a leader in his community for over 60 years. In 1944, Red joined the Occum, Connecticut Volunteer Fire Department. Red served in various roles within the department before becoming fire chief in 1960, a position he held for 34 years. Red was not only an active and committed fireman, but he was also a pioneer. During Red's tenure, he ensured that Occum's department led the way in improving the life saving services which they provide to the people of eastern Connecticut. Occum was the first department in the state of Connecticut to employ two-way radio communication in fire trucks and other emergency service vehicles. Occum was also the first department that employed a computer to develop the skills of its first responders.

In 1970, Red founded the Occum volunteer ambulance service to provide the residents of Occum access to state-of-the-art emergency services. Red has also been a pioneer in taking care of his fellow first responders. Red led the charge for establishing a pension system for volunteer firefighters. Despite putting their lives in on the line every day, volunteer firefighters do not receive a pension in recognition of their service. Red worked with State and local leaders in Connecticut to establish a program that allows local communities like Occum to establish retirement programs for volunteer firefighters.

Red has demonstrated his commitment to our first responders at the State, national and even international levels. After serving in the Connecticut State Firemen's Association since 1944, he was elected State President by his fellow firemen in 1977 and 1978.

In 1991, Red became the national chairman of the National Volunteer Fire Council, the largest volunteer firefighter organization in the country, and served in the post until 1994. His leadership within that organization and at home in Connecticut received further recognition when the Council chose him as the National Firefighter of the Year in October 1999. Along with this award, Red was presented with a certificate for \$2000 from Scott Health and Safety. In keeping with his unselfish nature, Red announced that he would donate the proceeds to the North Carolina Relief Fund to help fire departments that were devastated by Hurricane Floyd.

Red has also been generous enough to share his talents and expertise with the world. Red served as a representative for the United States at the World Federation of Firefighters meetings in Argentina, Denmark, Indonesia and Japan and is an active member of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors.

After a lifetime of service to his community and his fellow first responders it should come as no surprise that Red would be chosen as an inductee to the Connecticut Firefighters' Hall of Fame. This latest recognition is one

that is well deserved, and I applaud my friend Red for receiving this prestigious award. We in eastern Connecticut are lucky to have such a fine public servant.

IN HONOR OF CATHERINE "LENA"
ZABARA DICHELE

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th birthday of Lena Dichele, a living example of the hard work and spirit that we cherish as Americans. Born on January 1, 1909, Lena immigrated to the United States at age 7. Her story began at Ellis Island, where so many other American stories began. Although Lena stopped her formal education in the 8th grade to help her family in trying economic times, she went on to become a life-long educator.

At the age of 14, Lena learned to sew at the Waterbury Connecticut Girls' Club, where she transformed this skill into her life's passion. Lena went on to become a sewing instructor at the Girls Club and an informal authority on all things sewing at Tops Department Store in Waterbury. She was also familiar enough with electric sewing machines to assist customers and perform repairs. Lena began sharing her love of sewing with seniors throughout Waterbury by teaching at the Pearl Street Neighborhood Center, the Palladino Center and the Mattatuck Senior Center, where she ended her 83 year career in 2006 at the age of 97.

On New Year's Day, Lena's family gathered to celebrate her 100th birthday. But more appropriately, they celebrated the impact that she has had on her family, her friends, and her community, during those 100 years. Lena's story is a truly American story, and I am honored to represent her in Congress, and be able to congratulate her today, here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, on this milestone.

HONORING HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL-USA ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hostelling International-USA on their 75th anniversary. Since 1934, Hostelling International-USA has encouraged cultural interaction among its guests by providing affordable overnight accommodations for domestic and international travelers.

In my home state of Oregon, Hostelling International-USA operates three facilities, which together welcome more than 35,000 visitors each year.

J.R.R. Tolkien once wrote: "Not all those who wander are lost." Travel reminds us of the unity in our diverse world, and I believe that the more we interact with others, the more we can understand of ourselves.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Hostelling International-USA on this important occasion.